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BELLAMY VERNELL P  
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06/01/82 174342 PRINTER: LI

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AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

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E.O. 12065: N/A

TAGS: SOPN, UR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - JULY 23, 1981

FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE, FOLLOWING ARE RELEVANT

EXCERPTS FROM DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING FOR JULY 23, 1981.

SPOKESMAN WAS DEAN FISCHER.

MR. FISCHER. GOOD AFTERNOON. ONE STATEMENT TODAY, ACTUALLY  
A CORRECTION OF SOMETHING I SAID YESTERDAY. IT'S A  
CORRECTION RELATING TO INFORMATION ON THE RETURN OF THE MIA  
REMAINS FROM VIETNAM.

LIEUTENANT VAN DYKE WAS NOT PICTURED CAPTURED ALIVE IN ANY  
MEDIA, BUT WAS REPORTED TO HAVE BEEN ALIVE BY OTHER RE-  
TURNING PRISONERS.

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SECONDLY, A QUESTIONER YESTERDAY ASKED WHAT DIPLOMATIC  
CHANNELS WE'RE USING TO SEEK FURTHER INFORMATION FROM  
THE VIETNAMESE ON THESE THREE CASES. AS YOU MAY BE AWARE,  
WHEN WE HAVE REASON TO TALK TO THE VIETNAMESE ON OPERATIONAL  
MATTERS, WE DO SO EITHER THROUGH OUR EMBASSIES OR MISSIONS  
IN BANGKOK, PARIS AND/OR NEW YORK.  
I'LL TAKE YOUR QUESTIONS.

Q. YESTERDAY THERE WAS A JOINT HEARING ON THE HILL SPON-  
SORED BY THE HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE ON THE HEL-  
SINKI COMMISSION. THEY HAD QUITE A BATTERY OF WITNESSES  
THERE. IT WAS ON THE SUBJECT OF AFGHANISTAN. ONE OF THE  
WITNESSES WAS IDENTIFIED AS ONE OF THE RESISTANCE LEADERS  
FROM AFGHANISTAN; AND HE TESTIFIED THAT THERE WERE CUBAN  
TROOPS, CZECH TROOPS, AND OTHER TROOPS FROM EASTERN EUROPE  
PARTICIPATING IN THE FIGHTING IN AFGHANISTAN.

I DON'T EXPECT YOU TO HAVE AN ANSWER THERE, BUT WOULD YOU  
TAKE THE QUESTION OF WHETHER WE HAVE ANY EVIDENCE AT ALL,  
OR EVEN SUGGESTION, THAT THERE ARE SUCH TROOPS THERE?

A. LET ME ASK YOU. I'M SORRY, WHO WAS THE WITNESS?

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR  
252018Z /72  
REVIEWED BY T. Heavens DATE 8/31/82  
RDS ☐ or XDS ☐ EXT. DATE \_\_\_\_\_  
TS AUTH. \_\_\_\_\_ REASON(S) \_\_\_\_\_  
EMPORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐  
DECLASSIFIED ☐ RELEASABLE ☒  
RELEASE DENIED ☐  
PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS \_\_\_\_\_

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SOMEONE IDENTIFIED AS AN AFGHAN FREEDOM FIGHTER?

Q. YES. HE WAS SUPPOSED TO HAVE BEEN ONE OF THE RESISTANCE LEADERS.

A. RIGHT.

Q. HIS NAME WAS HUSSEIN KAHN.

A. YES; I'LL BE GLAD TO TAKE THAT QUESTION. I'M NOT

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CERTAIN I CAN GET YOU A SPECIFIC ANSWER ON IT.

Q. O.K. A SECOND QUESTION THAT AROSE IN THE SAME HEARING: BOTH HUSSEIN KAHN AND A NUMBER OF THE OTHER WITNESSES

AGAIN TESTIFIED ABOUT SOVIET USE OF POISON GAS IN AFGHANISTAN, AND THIS HAS COME UP QUITE A NUMBER OF TIMES, AND IT NEVER SEEMS TO GET PINNED DOWN. THEY TALKED ABOUT THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF EFFECTS AND SO FORTH.

COULD WE HAVE SOME KIND OF POSITION FROM THE STATE DEPARTMENT AS TO WHAT EVIDENCE WE HAVE WHETHER OR NOT GAS IS BEING USED THERE BY THE SOVIETS?

A. I'LL TAKE THAT QUESTION, SURE.

Q. HOW EXTENSIVE IS U.S. AID TO THE AFGHAN FIGHTERS?

(LAUGHTER)

A. THAT'S A GOOD QUESTION.

I'M NOT SURE I ACCEPT THE PREMISE OF YOUR QUESTION.

(LAUGHTER)

Q. WELL, IS THERE ANY AID FROM THE UNITED STATES TO THE AFGHAN REBELS?

... I DON'T HAVE ANY COMMENT ON THAT.

Q. DOES THE UNITED STATES HAVE ANY INFORMATION TO SUGGEST THAT THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA IS SUPPLYING ENRICHED URANIUM TO SOUTH AFRICA?

A. I CAN GIVE YOU SOMETHING ON THAT. THIS WAS, I THINK, A REFERENCE TO JACK ANDERSON'S COMMENT TODAY.

A. LET ME JUST SAY THIS: IN KEEPING WITH OUR STANDARD

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PRACTICE, WE WILL NOT COMMENT ON STORIES ALLEGEDLY BASED ON INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION.

Q. IS THAT ALL? (LAUGHTER)

A. I HAVE A LITTLE MORE HERE.

Q. OK. WHY DON'T YOU JUST SUPPLY THE APPROPRIATE QUESTION? (LAUGHTER)

A. WELL, THE ONLY OTHER POINT I COULD MAKE IN THIS CONTEXT EVEN IF IT SOUNDS UNRELATED, SINCE THE QUESTION WASN'T ASKED: IN GENERAL DISCUSSIONS OF NUCLEAR MATTERS WITH THE CHINESE AND OTHER NUCLEAR EXPORTERS, WE'VE MADE KNOWN OUR VIEW THAT EXPORTS OF NUCLEAR MATERIALS SHOULD BE PROTECTED BY ADEQUATE SAFEGUARDS.

Q. DID SECRETARY HAIG DISCUSS SUCH REPORTS -- THAT IS, THE REPORT THAT THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA IS SUPPLYING

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ENRICHED URANIUM TO SOUTH AFRICA -- WITH THE CHINESE WHILE HE WAS IN PEKING?

A. ON THAT SUBJECT, I SIMPLY CAN'T DISCUSS THE DETAILS BECAUSE IT IS A CONFIDENTIAL DIPLOMATIC EXCHANGE.

Q. COULD I GO BACK AND ASK YOU TO TAKE THE ORIGINAL QUESTION QUITE APART FROM THE ANDERSON COLUMN, AS TO WHETHER THE UNITED STATES HAS ANY INFORMATION SUGGESTING THAT THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA IS SUPPLYING ENRICHED URANIUM TO SOUTH AFRICA?

A. IF I TAKE THE QUESTION I'M SURE MY ANSWER WOULD HAVE TO BE THE SAME. WE JUST WOULDN'T COMMENT.

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Q. BUT YOU'RE NOT COMMENTING ON THE GROUNDS THAT IT'S INTELLIGENCE -- THAT ANDERSON'S QUOTING INTELLIGENCE SOURCES -- BUT QUITE APART FROM THE INTELLIGENCE ASPECT OF IT, SEEMS TO ME THE QUESTION IS ONE OF SUBSTANCE.

A. ALL RIGHT. HAIG

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